

Missouri Assessment Program  
Spring 2002

Communication Arts

Released Items  
Grade 7

Confidential

## Directions

This poem is about the advice a mother gives to her son. Read the poem. Then answer Numbers 7 through 11.

# Mother to Son

Langston Hughes

- 1 Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.  
It's had tacks in it,  
And splinters,  
5 And boards torn up,  
And places with no carpet on the floor—  
Bare.  
But all the time  
I've been a-climbin' on,  
10 And reachin' landin's,  
And turnin' corners,  
And sometimes goin' in the dark  
Where there ain't been no light.  
So boy, don't you turn back.  
15 Don't you set down on the steps  
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.  
Don't you fall now—  
For I've still goin', honey,  
I've still climbin',  
20 And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.



**9** Read this section of the poem again:

**“But all the time  
I’ve been a-climbin’ on,  
And reachin’ landin’s,  
And turnin’ corners,”**

Explain what the mother means in the above lines.

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**10** The mother uses her own experience as a way to persuade the son not to give up. Is this an effective way to make her point? Use details and/or examples from the poem to support your answer.

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**11**

Write a diary entry from the point of view of the mother which summarizes the advice she gives to her son in the poem.

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## WRITING

### *Directions*

Now you will write a paper in response to a writing prompt. First, read the prompt in the box below.

Then use the separate paper your teacher has given you for your prewriting activity (such as brainstorming, listing, freewriting, clustering, mapping, or drawing).

After you finish your prewriting activity, write your first draft on the separate paper your teacher has given you. Look back at your prewriting activity for ideas.

### Writing Prompt

All the passages in Session 1 involve survival or personal safety. Imagine that you have been asked to contribute an article to your school newspaper. Write an article about school safety that includes advice you would give to students on how to make schools safer.



## FINAL COPY

### **D**irections

Now you have time to revise your draft. Reread your draft and think about the Writer's Checklist below. Check every box that makes a true statement about your draft.

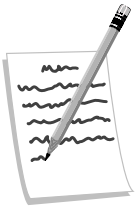
### Writer's Checklist



- ☐ My paper has a beginning, middle, and end.
- ☐ My paper uses paragraphing appropriately.
- ☐ My paper flows smoothly from one idea to another.
- ☐ My paper stays on the topic.
- ☐ My paper includes details and examples.
- ☐ My paper uses precise and vivid language.
- ☐ My paper includes a variety of sentence structures.
- ☐ My paper includes correct grammar/usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

For every box you did not check, make the necessary revisions on your draft before you write your final copy on Pages 5 through 9.

Please use **ONLY** a Number 2 pencil to write your final copy.



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